

# Summer Born Children Delaying Primary School & Academy Entry

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## **Relevant Documents**

School Admissions Code – statutory guidance (last updated 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022).

DFE Advice on the Admission of Summer Born Children – non-statutory advice (last updated 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023).

## **Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)**

Please note that for children with EHCPs the Department for Education (DFE) guidance about handling admission requests for delayed primary school start does not apply. Parents will need to discuss their child's situation and needs with Blackpool Council.

## **General Information**

All admission authorities must provide for the admission of children in the September following a 4<sup>th</sup> birthday (School Admissions Code – 2.17). The majority of children start school at this time.

When parents receive offers for reception places for the September after a child's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, they may:

- Access the place in September (and the majority do so).
- Agree part time attendance with the school or academy (usually on a short-term basis building to full time at an agreed date).
- Accept the place and agree to access it within the same school year – no later than when the child reaches statutory school age (usually a start date in January or March / April).

Parents can accept a reception place in the September after a 4<sup>th</sup> birthday and agree a delayed start within the same school year – but not beyond the start of the final term of that school year. We will reserve the offered place where a child will start reception in that school year.

## **Summer Born Children- General**

Summer born children will have birthdays between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Parents must apply for reception places for the September after a 4<sup>th</sup> birthday (statutory application deadline is 15<sup>th</sup> January prior to the September school start date).

Parents can decide to have a primary school start date in the September after a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday; however, there is no statutory entitlement to a reception place. Parents would normally need to apply for Year 1 places as the child would miss reception – and popular schools and academies may already be full.

Teachers are skilled in differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs. We encourage parents to visit the schools and academies. Staff will be able to explain how they can vary provision to meet the needs of individual children. In addition, how they can address the needs of each child as they move through the school or academy.

Whether a child attends a school, academy or an early years setting during the school year following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday they will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This is, in the main, based on learning through play.

If parents decide to access a nursery or early years setting during the school year after a child's 4th birthday there is no right to have a reception place in a primary school or academy from the September after the 5th birthday. The child would normally start school in Year 1.

### **Summer Born Children-**

#### **Requests for Full Year Deferral with Reception Start**

Parents of summer born children must apply for primary school or academy admission in the September after a 4<sup>th</sup> birthday (the statutory closing date is 15<sup>th</sup> January prior to the September school start date).

**Parents of summer born children can also apply to defer their child's admission until the September after a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday with a reception start. This is in addition to the usual primary application. There is a separate summer born application on Blackpool Council's website (please complete in addition to the usual reception application).**

Please note that it is unlikely applications for full year deferral with reception start received after 15<sup>th</sup> January will be considered (unless the information / evidence only became available after that date or you only moved to the Blackpool area after that date). We will not consider applications received after final primary allocations – about 2 weeks prior to statutory offer date on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

Individual admissions authorities will consider on time requests for full year deferral with a reception start. A decision to allow admission in the September after a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday with reception start only applies to the school or academy whose admission authority has agreed the request. Decisions about the same request may vary between different admission authorities.

In most cases decision(s) about any request to defer until the September after a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday with a reception start will be confirmed ahead of the statutory primary offer date on 16<sup>th</sup> April (there may sometimes be a delay – for example where the outcome of an SEND assessment impacts on consideration of a particular request).

#### **Making Requests for Full Year Deferral with Reception Start**

Advice from the Department for Education (DFE) is that it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide information to support a request. This will allow decisions based on the circumstances of each case.

Parents are not required to obtain professional evidence or other information, which they do not already have. Admission authorities consider each request based on the information and supporting evidence that parents include with their request. However, information that is more robust will assist the decision making process in relation to a full year deferral with reception start.

Admission authorities will generally consider the following (these are not however exclusive – please the DFE guidance):

- Parent's views;
- Information about a child's academic, social and emotional development;
- Where relevant, a child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- Whether a child would naturally have fallen into a lower age group if they had not been born prematurely;
- The potential impact of admitting a child to their normal age group and, as a consequence, missing a year of education.

For schools for which the Council is the admission authority we must take the view of the Headteacher into account. All admission authorities must take into account transfers for children already being educated out of their normal age group and maintain this arrangement unless there are sound educational reasons to do otherwise.

The process for considering admission after a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday with a reception start follows DFE guidance issued in April 2023. There is no statutory requirement for any admission authority to place any child outside of his or her chronological year group.

Applications for full year deferral including only personal views and opinions and reference to guidance and research are not usually as compelling as those that focus upon the child's individual needs and circumstances. Requests which include specific reasons (supported by evidence) which show why it would be in the child's best interests to be admitted to reception in the September following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday are likely to be considered as more compelling.

### **Decisions**

The Council will share information provided by parents with the admission authorities and head teachers of all relevant schools and academies. The Council and individual admission authorities may liaise direct with parents. Schools and academies may offer visits for discussion. Admission authorities are encouraged to offer visits. The Council's admission team co-ordinates responses and we will share and discuss information with other relevant professionals (Early Year, Health professionals, SEND etc.).

In accordance with guidance, there will be consideration of the potential impact on a child of admission to Year 1 without having attended a Reception year. The final decision will be for each admission authority (and may vary between admission authorities). We will usually confirm decisions ahead of the primary offer date on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**Where a full year with a reception start is agreed, we will ask parents to withdraw their application for the normal year of entry (after a 4<sup>th</sup> birthday). Parents will need to submit a new application for the next admission round (for a reception place in the September after a 5<sup>th</sup> birthday at the school or academy, which has agreed full year deferral.**

Where full year deferral with a reception start is refused, parents will need to decide whether to accept the offer of a reception place for the normal year of entry, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **Additional Information**

An agreed deferral does not mean a place that a place will be automatically be allocated at a preferred school or academy the following year. All applications are subject to the School Admission Code and associated legislation. Agreement by any admission authority to full year deferral does not provide any additional priority for a place the following year. Each school and academy's determined admission arrangement apply to each year's batch of intake applications.

After admission, the placement of any child within a school or academy is a decision for the head teacher and governors.

Once agreed that a child can be educated outside of their normal year group the assumption will be that this will continue unless there are sound educational reasons to do otherwise. This applies to later transfers between primary schools and to secondary transition.

Children who proceed through primary and then secondary school or academy a year behind their usual age range (year group) will reach statutory school leaving age on the last Friday in the June after a 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. They could therefore leave secondary school at the end of Year 10 without completing Year 11 or taking any GCSE examinations.

### **Challenging Decisions**

There is no statutory right to appeal a decision not to allow full year deferral with a reception start. The statutory admission appeal process does not apply to a decision to refuse delayed entry to a school or academy.

Parents may submit a complaint via the school's complaints procedure for academies and voluntary aided schools or via the Council's complaints process for community and voluntary controlled schools.

If there is concern about how an application has been handled parents may then approach the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (after local complaints processes have been undertaken).

**Updated  
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